

Reps. Harry Mitchell (D-Ariz.) and Ron Paul (R-Texas)

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With unemployment still hovering around 10 percent, foreclosures up 21 percent, and so many families struggling to make ends meet, we believe this is the wrong time for members of Congress to raise their own pay.

Unfortunately, unless Congress takes action to stop it that is precisely what will happen.

This Congress, we have once again introduced legislation, H.R. 4255, to prevent members of Congress from receiving the next scheduled pay raise, and have once again been joined by more than 100 colleagues. Last year, our efforts helped to successfully block the fiscal 2010 pay raise. We believe that blocking the pay raise again this year is equally important.

In times like these, Congress should be focused on helping our economy and helping those who are suffering because of it, not raising our own pay. The American people are not getting a raise this year. Neither should Congress.

Last year President Barack Obama froze pay for senior White House employees. Even U.S. Chief Justice John Roberts recently announced that, in a major break from tradition and in light of the fact that "so many of our fellow citizens have been touched by hardship," he will not seek salary increases this year for federal judges.

Congress should follow suit.

In addition to facing an economy that has left so many Americans out of work and underemployed, Congress must tackle a rising national debt and continual budget deficits.

Last year, we saved taxpayers \$2.5 million by blocking the pay raise for members of Congress. While this raise is dwarfed by the \$12 trillion debt, it represents the type of bipartisan fiscal responsibility we believe Congress needs to adopt. That is why our bill has been endorsed by Citizens Against Government Waste and the National Taxpayers Union.

Enacting H.R. 4255, the Stop the Automatic Pay Raise for Members of Congress in FY2011 Act, is an important, albeit obvious, step for Congress to take in the fiscal 2011 budget.